

Monday
28 April 1986
Vol V No 081
Annex No 028

Annex

Daily Report

MIDDLE EAST & AFRICA

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FOREIGN BROADCAST INFORMATION SERVICE

Vol V 28 Apr 86

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LIBYA

Al-Qadhdhafi Ponders His 'Night of Horror'

LD270938 London SUNDAY TODAY in English 27 Apr 86
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["World Exclusive interview" with Libyan leader Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi by Tripoli correspondent (Sayeed Naqul) on 26 April in Tripoli under the headline "My Night of Horror, by Al-Qadhdhafi"; and subheaded "Reagan Wants To End the World"]

[Text] Colonel al-Qadhdhafi's man drives me from my hotel to Bab al-Aziziyah, a large compound enclosed by 12 ft high walls. This is where Al-Qadhdhafi usually lives and maintains his offices. It was his house in this compound which was most severely hit by the recent American bombing, killing Hana, his 16-month-old adopted daughter, and injuring other members of the family.

Sunk in the ground at the gate are two tanks, their turrets barely visible above the ground. We enter the compound, past road-blocks and a series of tanks and armoured carriers, to a building behind a huge transmission tower. This is the conference building. There are soldiers scattered all over, including a stunningly beautiful black woman in combat gear near two metal detectors at the entrance. I am escorted to a large hall lined with heavy leather sofas. Two modern chandeliers are suspended from an exceptionally high ceiling.

The foreign minister then ushers me past a broad corridor with an austere wall to wall carpet to a staircase leading to another air-conditioned hall, deep below ground level. There is a table tennis table in the middle and a dozen soldiers with light machineguns are watching TV, smoking and throwing cigarette butts in a huge ashtray.

He leads me through a series of rooms to a rectangular room about 15 ft by 25 with a low ceiling, white walls and a medium-sized table in the middle — rather like a spruced-up army camp office.

Colonel al-Qadhdhafi, wearing a dark grey Air Force-style jump suit, a black embroidered gown over his shoulders, is standing behind the table. He greets me with a warm handshake. A few copies of his green book lie scattered on a side table.

If Al-Qadhdhafi is under pressure he does not show it. The entire

conversation is in studied, moderate tones. The expression throughout is a sort of ponderous thoughtfulness, interrupted occasionally by something between a spontaneous smile and laughter.

Throughout the hour-long tape-recorded interview he spoke in a slow, even tone. Foreign Minister Kamil al-Maqhur [title as published] was the interpreter.

Q: Colonel al-Qadhdhafi, the world would be interested to know what exactly happened on the night of April 15 — the night of American bombing in Tripoli of your house?

A: I was asleep in my house with my family. I could not imagine that in this century there were barbaric people who were planning an attack on my family while they were asleep. There was no reason whatsoever, no direct conflict between the U.S. and Libya — no rationale, no reason for the U.S. to have done what it did. No reason for a great power to use this kind of power against a small country.

Q: Let us come to the political side of the story gradually. People would be interested in the human side of the drama that night. How did you escape? Did the bombs hit the room where you were or were you far away? Did you see the bombs burst?

A: The house came down like a heap of rubble. I started to save the children, it was difficult groping my way between the bombs and the ashes — it was particularly difficult that night because my wife had a slipped disc and she was strapped to the bed. The attack was carried out by 33 planes — especially for the house and my tent. You can take a look yourself.

Q: How do you propose to respond to this act of aggression on the part of the U.S.?

A: By continuation of the struggle of humanity, of human beings and the struggle against imperialism. The right of all people in the world to be free, to have a place in the sun. We must with all our strength continue our efforts to maintain peace in the world.

Q: As a statesman and as a political analyst, how do you explain President Reagan's actions? Why do you think did he do it? For domestic consumption? To alter the politics in the Middle East?

A: There are psychological reasons, deep psychological reasons.

Q: Could you expand on that reasoning?

A: A spirit of crusade against the East, against Islam — an anti-Semitic feeling against the Arabs, because the Arabs are Semites. The true Semites are the Arabs.

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Then he hates revolution, he hates socialism, he hates liberation struggles. He is a capitalist and a fanatic. I am still talking about the psychological aspect. He is a failed actor who became the President of a great power and he wants to show he can move fleets, big war machines. He is suffering from old age and from cancer. He wants to finish the world by the end of his life. Why should the world stay after him? I have studied psychology and this analysis therefore has a basis.

He has a special relationship with Thatcher — he wants to prove himself to her (laughs).

Q: Prove himself as what? A man?

A: Yes, exactly (laughs). These are the psychological reasons for what he did. There are deep political reasons as well. For these his political advisers are responsible — they are responsible for what he does. His advisers believe that it is important and imperative to fill the vacuum in the Mediterranean in a big way.

And there are two more aircraft carriers which are under construction in the Soviet Union. Americans fear that changes may happen in the area which would prevent them from having a presence.

Q: What new developments, what changes?

A: Fulfilment of Arab unity, revolutions in the area, victory of the Green movement in West Germany and Europe. It is a very dangerous move by the NATO alliance inspired by the United States to destabilise the balance that was worked out after the Second World War.

It is an experiment beginning with Libya to upset this balance. They thought they had found the right moment to change the international balance of power.

Q: How did they think they could achieve this aim?

A: By mounting the attack, by trying out new sophisticated weapons, by intervention in the area. In the final analysis it is all directed against the Soviet Union. Libya was just in the way — to resist. Libya repulsed the attack (laughs). That is why she deserves to be called the Great Jamahiriya (the great republic).

Q: When planes are hijacked and when innocent people are killed at airports or discotheques — this is what we call terrorism. Why is your name dragged into these incidents most of the time?

A: Their (American) purpose is to finish the Arab liberation movement. They want to find an excuse to hit the liberation movements. So when they find incidents like a plane hijack, they grab them and do massive propaganda to divert attention from the struggle of the Palestinian people.

Q: But do you deplore acts of terrorism — like the latest bomb blast in the British Airways office in London — do you deplore the attack?

A: We are against terrorism clearly and definitely. Hijacking and killing innocent people — we don't accept these methods. And they (the Americans) know that we do not do these things. But they want to finish the struggle of all people for their liberation, and they cannot do that — they cannot put an end to people's struggle for liberation. Empires always come to an end: The people always win. They are rowing against the current.

Violence existed in this world before I made the revolution in Libya. Terrorism existed and it was waged by the Americans and the Israelis before I was born. Since 1936, 1940, 1948 — these were the years of Israeli and American terrorism against the Arabs.

There are some problems in the world which have to be solved before violence ends — the Palestinian question, the problem in Ireland, minorities in the world, South Africa, Namibia — the question of freedom in Latin America. Racism, exploitation, colonialism — these are the causes of violence. New Caledonia is a cause of violence. Martinique is a cause of violence. Violence cannot be finished by an air raid on Libya or on my tent and this raid on my tent will not finish the struggle for freedom.

Q: If President Reagan does not listen to the nonaligned, if he does not listen to the United Nations, he has the military might to do what he likes, how do you see the scenario developing?

A: He will create a global imbalance between the NATO countries and the Warsaw Pact. Then he will find himself face to face with the Warsaw Pact. His actions could well lead to a third world war. But by his actions he is also hastening the unity of the Arab world. America pushed Cuba to become a communist country. He might push Libya in that direction.

Q: Do you mean to say he might push you into the communist camp?

A: Anyone who comes after me might be pushed to be a communist. (pause.) Even me.

Q: Why are you not a communist?

A: (Laughs) Reagan is trying to show us that in this world we cannot be neutral. He is trying to get us out of our neutrality. If there is no neutrality we choose the socialist camp against the imperialist camp.

Q: Has the Soviet Union come to your aid in this hour?

A: Of course they have come to our help.

Q: So there will not be any more American bombing of Libya?

A: Well I told you above the reasons why he attacked us. The reasons still exist — and Reagan might continue in his way.

Q: Is the bombing of Libya linked with the larger West Asian scenarios? It might be the American perception that Saddam Husayn in Iraq is about to fall. This could result in a formidable Tehran, Damascus, Tripoli axis. Maybe the Americans wish to knock out one leg of this tripod?

A: (laughs heartily) Maybe you are right. Maybe.

Uncertainty Prevails for Libyan Leadership

LD270940 London THE SUNDAY TIMES in English
27 Apr 86 p 27 — FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

["Who Rules in Tripoli?" by Tripoli correspondent David Blundy]

[Text] Colonel al-Qadhafi's tent, slightly dented by a falling lamp post during the American air raid on the Bab al-Aziziyah

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barracks in Tripoli 12 days ago, has been repitched. His tapes of Egyptian music are back in their rack, his Sony radio is retuned to the BBC Arabic service, and the glass of roses is back on the coffee table replenished.

But Libya's Armed Forces, its foreign policy and its internal tensions cannot be tidied up so easily. Tomorrow morning a secret report is due to drop on to the colonel's desk. Al-Qadhdhafi does not like criticism and this report on the response of Libya's military and air defences to the U.S. raid, written by a group of East European military analysts, will not please him.

Almost everything went wrong. Despite the early warning of the attack on Tripoli, the Libyan capital, and Benghazi, the second-largest city, 1,000 kilometers to the east, his air defences did not function until the first wave of aircraft had dropped their bombs. The report will not even touch on the most sensitive areas: that the Libyan military is split by rival factions. Nor will it mention the Soviet Union's role in the conflict.

Last week a Russian destroyer docked in Tripoli harbour and its captain played host to Libyan dignitaries. The fleet is two weeks too late. Libya asked the Russian advisers — there are about 5,000 of them in the country — to play an active role in the air defence during the attack. They refused to do so. They also failed to fix a crucial SAM-5 missile system. Repairs had to be carried out hurriedly by British and West European technicians.

Libya is now asking Yugoslavia and Czechoslovakia for huge contributions of ammunition, missiles, electronic equipment for aircraft and "different types of weaponry", according to an Eastern bloc military expert. He said Libya is not turning to the Soviet Union because of the delays in delivery, the Russians failure to service the weapons and the political strings attached to the arms purchase: "It's always the same way with the Russians."

Al-Qadhdhafi and his number two, Abd al-Salam Jallud, are now carrying out their own post-mortem. According to Jallud, they are "revaluating Libya's policies".

Although facts are scant and rumours rife, it is possible to piece together a rough picture of Al-Qadhdhafi's Libya as it faces its worst crisis of his 17-year reign. Just before the raid Al-Qadhdhafi was in unusually high spirits. He was in the Bab al-Aziziyah barracks, the military compound in the centre of Tripoli. He lives separately from his wife and children in an apartment underneath the administration building — not in his tent, which has a more ceremonial function.

That week he had walked each morning across to his family house to have breakfast with his children. He suffers from backache and was having regular treatment from a Yugoslav masseuse. He worked out in his gymnasium and kicked a football around on the pitch outside the house. To relieve his back, and think, he spent hours lying flat on the ground, a cover over his body and face, two bodyguards outside the door of the room. His voice had grown husky and his throat hurt, but his doctors are treating it as a mild, psychological problem.

On the night of the raid he met George Hawi, head of the

Lebanese Communist party, in the tent at midnight. He then went below ground to his suite for dinner at 1 am. At 1.30, when he was first warned of the impending raid, Al-Qadhdhafi walked 200 yards along a passage to his underground command room.

He emerged after the raid to a welter of speculation. According to the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency, quoted in *THE WASHINGTON POST*, he was in a deep depression; he was a puppet in the hands of his Army; the leadership had been taken over by four of the young officers who staged the coup with him in 1969.

For the moment, however, Al-Qadhdhafi is still in control. Despite the death of his adopted 15-month-old daughter, Han-nah, in the raid, and the injuries to two of his sons, he was carrying out his normal official duties last week. He met heads of state and key diplomats from the Eastern bloc.

There is no evidence that his power has been diminished by the American attack or by the symptoms of internal unrest that followed it. They are familiar problems for Al-Qadhdhafi; and dissent is dealt with swiftly and brutally. It looks as if heads might roll again in the Army, the air defence unit and the Navy, which is believed to have staged a small revolt after the American raid on Surt in March and again after the American raid two weeks ago. Friday's issue of *THE JAMAHIRIYA*, which is the voice of the revolutionary committees and reflects the thinking of Al-Qadhdhafi and Jallud, carried a remarkably outspoken editorial. It implicitly criticised the ministry of (information) for its outlandish and unprovable claims that the Libyan Army shot down dozens of US planes. "We don't need war broadcasts that describe planes falling like leaves in autumn."

It demanded a review of the Libyan Army's poor performance, during the American attack, and this could herald a purge of military personnel. "We have to know exactly who got confused, who was wrong, who ran away and who remained on the scene," said *THE JAMAHIRIYA*. "We have to clear up our Libyan house and review how we behaved hour to hour in the crisis."

It is difficult to penetrate the placid surface of life in Libya and reach the real tensions that lie beneath it. Officially, as Al-Qadhdhafi said recently, Libya has "no government, no army and no police. Look around you, Libya is ruled by the masses." There cannot, logically, be a coup in Libya because "the people cannot seize power from themselves," as Jallud says.

But nobody is sure, even in more tranquil times, who runs what. The Justice and Oil Ministries were abolished at a stroke earlier this year. The police do not exist officially, although police cars patrol the streets constantly. There was an incident outside the central station when a patrol car pulled up, policemen jumped out and arrested another policeman who was standing on the steps. Libya is a strange place.

At the Al-Khebir Hotel, where the journalists stay, confusion rules. Charles Glass, the ABC correspondent, has now packed and unpacked his bags three times after being expelled and then reprieved. He was expelled again on Thursday. "Get out within the hour. Go to the airport," said a ministry official. As Glass paid his bill the same official rushed up to him: "Why are you leaving?"